

Law Enforcement Policy for On-Scene Lethality Assessment

The purpose of a law enforcement policy is to define the protocol for implementing the lethality assessment while on-scene of a domestic violence incident and to identify potential risk of future danger in intimate partner violence cases. The procedures in the two examples linked below can be adapted and amended to fit the law enforcement agency's needs. The protocols will vary depending on the tool used, and resources available in the community.

Key points to consider when developing a policy:

- The lethality assessment will be voluntarily administered to victims or alleged victims encountered by law enforcement personnel during the investigation of intimate partner violence cases.
- Develop a follow-up protocol that prioritizes victim safety and confidentiality if the law enforcement agency will be conducting follow-up with the victim after the completion of the lethality assessment.
- Develop the protocol for delivering the completed lethality assessment to all necessary parties in time to be used for decision-making.
- Develop protocol, in accordance with the HRT, on how the completed assessment can be accessed by prosecutorial staff, judicial staff, community-based and/or systems-based advocates, and the HRT coordinator.
- Incorporate an officer's appropriate use of the lethality assessment into performance feedback. Supervisors could observe officers using the lethality assessment on-scene, evaluate the law enforcement officer's use of the lethality assessment, provide feedback, and/or include in performance reviews.
- Consider including the victim's report of what they experienced before the law enforcement officer arrived, and-perpetrator behavior the officer observed on-scene, in the officer's report.
- Incorporate the use of the lethality assessment in the law enforcement agency's quality control process. This could include reviewing:
 - If lethality assessments are being completed consistently with every intimidated partner violence related incident; and
 - How law enforcement officers are utilizing and reporting the information gathered from the lethality assessment.

[Burlington, Vermont Police Department Directive](#)

[Connecticut Police Response To Crimes of Family Violence - Model](#)